



Top Stories

Israeli jets attack southern Lebanon despite partial halt to air strikes

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Security Council sets deadline over Iran nuclear program

The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution today demanding Iran halt all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities

Featured story

Gay teens assaulted and fined by police in Romania

Two gay teens were fined and assaulted by police after cuddling, holding hands and kissing in a public park in Bucharest, Romania. Homosexuality, including public manifestations of it, was decriminalised in Romania in 2001

Wikipedia Current Events

- North Korea and South Korea exchange fire across the Demilitarized Zone.
- The UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1697 (2006), which extends the UNIFIL mandate until 31 August 2006. The previous extension ended 31 July 2006.
- Syrian President Bashar al-Assad told the Syrian military on Monday to raise its readiness,

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- pledging not to abandon support for Lebanese resistance against Israel.
- Tony Blair and Arnold Schwarzenegger have announced their intention to collaborate to decrease carbon emissions and fight global warming. Their plan includes incentives for companies which limit their carbon emissions, among other carbon-limiting measures.
- Incumbent Fradique de Menezes wins Sao Tome and Principe's presidential election.
- The UN Security Council has expressed its "shock and distress" at the previous day's Israeli attack in which 54 Lebanese civilians, many of them children, were killed.
- World leaders must apply "maximum pressure" to bring about a UN resolution for a sustainable ceasefire in the Middle East, Tony Blair has said.
- Israeli Defence Minister Amir Peretz has said that, despite a 48-hour halt to air strikes on south Lebanon, Israel cannot agree to an immediate ceasefire.
- The Israeli Air Force has conducted airstrikes near Taiybe, Lebanon, despite claims that air strikes would be halted for forty-eight hours.
- Condoleezza Rice, in Jerusalem, says that she is calling for a cease fire and put in place a multi-national peacekeeping force.

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- John Howard announces that he intends to stay on as Prime Minister of Australia until the 2007 election which he plans to contest as Leader of the Liberal Party of Australia.
- NATO takes over command of operations in southern Afghanistan in Kandahar from a US-led coalition.

Canadian census forms missing

Currently there are 676,000 Canada 2006 Census forms unfilled countrywide following the May 16 census, a large number from Alberta and British Columbia. Canada operates a mandatory census, requiring all citizens to participate or face court action, a CAD500 fine and/or three months imprisonment.

Census workers are coming to citizens' houses and asking them to fill them out. "We'll keep following up until we get them; it's just costing taxpayers lots and lots of money for us to keep doing it," said Lisa Gibbons from Statistics Canada.

"The census provides a snapshot of the country as a whole and of individual provinces, and each community and how it compares with where it was five years ago," said Gibbons.

Obrador supporters block streets in Mexico City

Tents began sprouting in Mexico's capital Sunday afternoon after leftist presidential candidate

Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador called on his supporters to set up camp on the capital until a recount is ordered by the Federal Electoral Tribunal.

The encampments are to be placed along a 4.6-mile stretch of the city. As of now, the number of people in the camps is unknown but the encampments themselves are expected to block most of the streets in the city, an expectation made much more believable by the fact that in Sunday, only hours after Obrador's message, one of the capital's major avenues was blocked for miles. This was only the latest action in a series of protests after the controversial elections that took place in July 2, when Felipe Calderon beat Lopez Obrador, the candidate considered most popular, by less than a percentage point. Lopez Obrador stated he will only back down if the recount is made and a winner is re-chosen, subsequently the protests are not expected to stop until the Federal Electoral Tribunal makes a decision upon the disputed election.

Israeli jets attack southern Lebanon despite partial halt to air strikes

Israeli jets have carried out strikes in southern Lebanon, despite agreeing to halt air attacks for 48 hours. An army spokesman has confirmed the action saying the it was intended to support ground troops in the area and was not targeting anything specific.

Meanwhile Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz addressed parliament saying that an immediate cease was not planned and that military action in Lebanon would continue.

He said "It's forbidden to agree to an immediate cease-fire, Israel will expand and strengthen its

activities against the Hezbollah."

Security Council sets deadline over Iran nuclear program

The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution today demanding Iran halt all "enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development" before August 31. The resolution was passed under Article 40, Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which sets the stage for possible economic sanctions if Iran does not comply with the resolution, but does not authorise military action. Iran's envoy to the UN has rejected the move.

The resolution, number 1696, was drafted by the permanent five members of the council and was passed by a 14-1 vote, with Qatar, the only Arab member of the council voting against.

The resolution expressed "serious concern" at Iran's non-compliance with the IAEA's demand to halt enrichment and other activities and asked the IAEA director to report on Iran's compliance by the end of August. This is the first legally binding demand on Iran to halt enrichment work, and the first to suggest possible sanctions. The resolution says that "appropriate measures" will be taken if Iran does not comply, but does not explicitly state any threat of sancions.

Iran's ambassador to the UN, Javad Zarif told the Reuters news agency, "Iran's peaceful nuclear programme poses no threat to international peace and security and therefore dealing with this issue in the Security Council is unwarranted and void of any legal basis or practical utility,"

Valery Churkin, Russia's

ambassador to the UN said the deadline was meant to meet Iran's request to allow it to consider an offer made in June by the permanent five and Germany, offering Iran a "package" of sops in return for giving up enrichment activities.

Lesbians lose High Court marriage bid

Two lesbians who married lawfully in Canada have failed in their High Court bid to have their matrimony accepted under law in the United Kingdom.

Sue Wilkinson and Celia Kitzinger married in Vancouver in 2003, and they now live together in North Yorkshire. But they say the UK's failure to accept the legality of their vows infringes a fundamental human right; under Article twelve of the Human Rights Act, it is stated that everyone has a right to marry.

But Sir Mark Potter, the President of the High Court Family Division, ruled today that their union should be accepted as a civil partnership instead of marriage. He emphasised that marriage is a relationship between a man and a woman designed for creating and bringing children up: "It is apparent that the majority of people, or at least of governments, not only in England but Europe-wide, regard marriage as an old-age institution, valued and valuable, respectable and respected, and as a means not only of encouraging monogamy but also the procreation of children and their development and nurture in a family unit in which both maternal and paternal influences are available in respect of their nurture and upbringing."

The judge also said same-sex laws in England are in no way inferior

as they are recognised as civil partnerships which give gay and lesbian couples the same rights as married couples on many issues. However, the two women say civil partnerships are not good enough for gay couples.

After the hearing, Ms Wilkinson said she and Ms Kitzinger were deeply disappointed by the judge's decision. She said they had been stripped of their marriage by a judge who believes the traditional notion of marriage as being between a man and a woman so they can create children. "It perpetuates discrimination and it sends out a message that lesbian and gay marriages are inferior," she commented. The couple are now seeking financial help so they can mount an appeal. "This judgement will not stand the test of time. We are looking forward to the day when there is full equality of marriage, not just for us but for all same-sex couples," Ms Wilkinson added.

U.S. says Israel has agreed to suspend air strikes for 48 hours after deadly strike on Qana

After one of its raids killed at least 56 civilians, Israel agreed on Monday to suspend its aerial activities in south Lebanon for 48 hours. The announcement came after extended meetings between Condoleezza Rice, the US secretary of state, and Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister.

Adam Ereli, a US state department spokesman in Jerusalem, said "Israel has agreed to a 48-hour suspension of aerial activity in south Lebanon to investigate today's tragic incident in Qana,"

The aerial ceasefire began after midnight on Sunday but fighting

on the ground continues as Israeli forces aim to create a 'security zone' inside Lebanon along the Israeli border. Lebanon has no air force nor air defences.

Gadi Eisenkaut, army operations chief General, said "By Wednesday we are going to establish a two-kilometer (one-mile) wide 'security zone' in which there will be no infrastructure or sign of Hezbollah's presence"

Today in History

1774 - Joseph Priestley discovered oxygen, corroborating the prior discovery of this chemical element by Carl Wilhelm Scheele.

1907 - The Scouting movement began with the first scout camp at Brownsea Island in Dorset, England.

1927 - People's Liberation Army was established in China.

1944 - The Warsaw Uprising against Nazi occupation began in Poland.

1981 - MTV debuted with the song Video Killed the Radio Star by The Buggles.

August 01 is Emancipation Day in Trinidad and Tobago, National Day in Switzerland

Quote of the Day

And now we meet in an abandoned studio
We hear the playback and it seems so long ago

And you remember the jingles used to go

Oh, oh - You were the first one.

Oh, oh - You were the last one.

Video killed the radio star.

~ The Buggles ~

Word of the Day

expurgate; v

- To edit out rude, incorrect, offensive, or useless information from a book, CD or other publication.

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